

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for determining affective information for at least one image in an imaging system, comprising the steps of:
 - a) sequentially displaying a plurality of digital images for viewing by a user;
 - b) monitoring the viewing time for each of the plurality of digital images; and
 - c) using the viewing time to determine affective information for at least one of the digital images.
2. The method of claim 1 further including the step of:
 - d) associating the affective information with the at least one digital image.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the affective information provides the degree of interest of the user.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein the degree of interest is determined by relating the viewing time for the at least one digital image with the average viewing time for the plurality of digital images.
5. The method of claim 1 further including the step of monitoring the facial expression of the user.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the smile size of the user is determined for each of the plurality of digital images.
7. The method of claim 6 wherein a degree of preference is determined for each of the plurality of digital images by relating the smile size corresponding to each digital image to an average smile size.

8. The method of claim 4 wherein the degree of interest is determined for each of the plurality of digital images, and is stored along with the corresponding digital image in separate digital image files.

9. A method for providing affective information for images in an imaging system, comprising the steps of:

- a) sequentially displaying a plurality of digital images for viewing by a user;
- b) monitoring the time intervals during which the user views each of the plurality of digital images; and
- c) using the time intervals to determine affective information for at least one of the plurality of digital images.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the affective information is stored in a personal affective tag.

11. A system for providing affective information for images in an imaging system, comprising:

- a) a digital memory which stores a set of digital images;
- b) a display which sequentially displays the set of digital images for viewing by a user; and
- c) a processor for monitoring the time that the user views each of the plurality of digital images and for providing affective information for at least one of the digital images.

12. The system of claim 11 wherein the affective information is stored in a personal affective tag.

13. The system of claim 11 wherein the processor determines a normalized viewing time by relating the viewing time for the at least one of the digital images to the average viewing time for the plurality of digital images.

14. The system of claim 11 further including a camera which monitors the facial expression of the user.

15. The system of claim 14 wherein the processor also processes at least one image from the camera to determine the smile size of the user.

16. The system of claim 11 wherein the system further includes a sensor for measuring the user's physiology.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein the sensor measures the user's galvanic skin response.

18. The system of claim 11 wherein the affective information is stored in the digital memory.

19. The system of claim 11 wherein the affective information is stored in a digital image file.

20. The system of claim 19 wherein the digital image file includes affective information and user identifiers for a plurality of users.

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